

Luss ny Graih

A MANX COMEDY.

Christopher R. Shimmin,

Author of The Charm, Illiam Kodhere's Will, &c.

THE MANX SOCIETY.

1913.

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A Manx Play in Two Acts.

Characters.

Miss Nellie Corkhill, Post Mistress and Shopkeeper
Juan James Daugherty, a lazy Beggarman
Cæsar Clucas, H.K., a Country Gentleman and a
Member of the House of Keys
Ned Cubbon, Skipper of a small fishing boat
Mrs. Cubbon, his Wife
Rev. Ferguson Fallows
Thobm Shimmin a blind man
Johnnie Kewley, a Boy about twelve years old
Ffinlo, a Boy about six years old

*Scene—Nellie Corkhill's shop, which is the
General Store and Post Office for the village
and neighbourhood.*

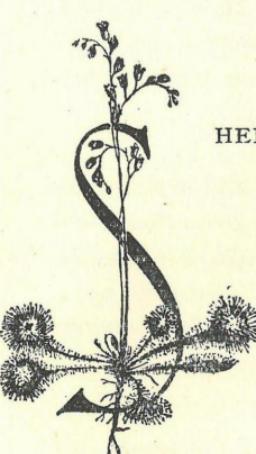
**Luss ny Graih.*



ACT 1.

The Scene is Nellie Corkhill's shop, which is the General Store and Post Office for the village and neighbourhood. Nellie Corkhill is an unmarried woman 35 years of age. She comes into the shop from the living room, and going behind counter, exclaims :

NELLIE CORKHILL.



HEE bannee mee! nearly eight o'clock and I've never looked at the letters yet. If Kelly the postman took them away without me putting a lil sight on them, I wouldn't have no rest all day. One day last winter I was put off, so that I hadn't a chance to examine a letter, and I declare I had the newaish for a whole week. I'm not a skeet, but a body likes to know what is going on, as the man said before now. I'll read the post cards first. (*Reads*). Aw, yes, Big Johnny sending for more oil cake. I really believe the man is feeding his childer on oil cake.—“Messrs. Singer & Co., Douglas, kindly send at your earliest convenience half a dozen No. 5 sewing machine needles.” That one, writing on a post card so that everybody will know that she has got a sewing machine.

* Round-leaved Sundew.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

“Kindly send at your earliest convenience.” The fine airs of that thing, just because she was a quarter at a Ladies’ School at Peel. It would be better if they paid their debts. (*Reads*) “Will ye send me a grep, and leave it at St. John’s station, and I’ll get it on Wednesday, and I’ll pay ye for it when I’ll be in town a Saturday with the cart. John Charles Corkish.” Now I like that ; a plain straightforward business letter. The meaning is plain, and the grammer is perfect. But then, of course, John Charles finished his education at the Higher Grade School. (*Reads*) “Dear Lucy, Mamma has been very unwell this week, so we must postpone our visit to you. However we shall expect you on Tuesday. Please remember to bring the new music which you said was so awfully pretty. Yours with best love, A.K.”—Aw, thou needn’t put A.K. I know thou are a Kerruish. The style of them ones, and I remember old Kerruish going around with a cadger’s cart selling herring. Them Kerruishes are putting dhui on me.

Enter JOHNNIE KEWLEY.

Me mother sent me for a penny stamp, and would you please give her the lend of your pen. (*She gives stamp and pen*). And please could you spare the ink? (*Gives ink bottle*). And me mother said would you be so kind as to lend her a sheet of writing paper and envelope. (*She gives them, muttering*) them Kewleys are always on the lend.

NELLIE (aloud)

Tell your mother not to put any tea in the ink bottle like she did last time; and Johnnie! tell her she forgot to pay for the last quarter of tea she got from me. (*Boy goes out*). I don’t know what is the woman doing with the money, and her man in good earning, a high road man, a Government official ye might say, getting good money, and paid wet or dry, regular, fifteen shillings a week, I’m wondering the Government can afford to pay such high wages. Let me look at the letters now. This one is from that

Cubbon's wife. I would give a good deal to have a look inside, but I dar'n't, I dar'n't. And here is a letter from oul Mrs. Teare to her son in London. She's writing regular, but I'm never seeing a letter coming back. Aw, out of sight, out of mind; that's the way till they are took sick, or out of work, and then they come home, Aw, thou'l get leave, and that's the way it is. (*Reads*). That's nothing, only a bill. That oul Kaymad is always sending bills to poor people, chasing people for money. Hard ones them Kaymads. (*Reads*). Another letter from Dan Clucas. That man is spending a deal of money on stamps. Three letters this week; the man must be spending shillings in the year on stamps. No wonder the Post Office is making profits. (*Reads*). Aw, now, here is a letter from Huan Christian to his sweetheart in Manchester. He must be thinking a lot of her; and a nice boy too; and I hope he'l get her. But what's the Manx boys wanting them English ones for? I don't know at all, at all, but I always liked Huan. I'd like to read this letter now, yes, I would, a love letter, yes. I'd rather read this one than all the others. It must be nice to be getting a love letter, and reading all the nice things they are saying to ye—yes. (*Falls into Jerrude (reverie): to herself softly*). I never got one, and I looked years for a letter from William. The way I used to watch for the postman. Me pretending I didn't mind, and the hunger inside for a letter, wasting me. But I got over it—I got over it (*sighs*). I wonder what has become of William? It's a nice name now William, and a pleasant sound. And the letters I used to write to him, and then put in the fire, for fear I might die suddenly in the night maybe,—and then people would be examining my things and reading them—and laughing. Well, well—there was never anything between us, and he never promised to write to me; it must be in the teens of years ago. He was only a boy anyway, only nineteen. I can remember the last Sunday he was home,

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and me putting a bit of the Luss ny Graih in his hymn-paper at the Anniversary.—Well, well, an oul maid like me thinking of such boghnid. No man will ever want me now. I am getting on the shelf, as they are saying. And yet it must be nice to feel that someone wants you. Well, well, I wonder if there is any virtue in the Luss ny Graih. The old people believed in it. I'd like to try it now. Suppose I try it on the first half-a-dozen men that come into the shop. It would be fun to have all the men in the place chasing me. There's some of the herb dried upstairs. I'll try it. (*Goes into the Kitchen*).

Enter JUAN JEM.

Finding shop empty he sits down, gazes around inquisitively until Nellie returns.

JUAN JEM.

Its raw weather for the time of the year, Nelly voght.

NELLIE.

Yes, Juan.

JUAN JEM.

It was a draggy day yesterday.

NELLIE.

Yes, Juan.

JUAN JEM.

They are allowing it will be fine to-day. There's a new moon this everin', and the sun gets high about tide time.

NELLIE.

I hope thou are right Juan, we could do with some nice warm days. Thou art early on the road to-day.

JUAN JEM.

Yes, I stayed last night at Sayle's at the Ballamoar.

NELLIE.

Then thou have had thy breakfast. They are saying

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that Sayle's one's are good for meat.

JUAN JEM.

Well, yis, I did have a pick of meat, a basin or two of porridge, and a drink of tay, and a salt herrin' and some flour bread. But I'm not carin' for flour bread; I'm tastin' the soda, and its not agreeein' with me. Now loaf bread is different, when its e't, its e't, and I never have no trouble. I have to be very careful of what I eat. (*Changes his tone*). The harvest will be late this year I'm thinkin', and since these self-binders have come in, there's not a day's work goin' for a poor body, and me that would be that glad to get something to do to earn a penny. But there's not work in; no.

NELLIE.

Could thou drink a cup of tea, Juan? *Takes the canister, also herb into Kitchen and returns,*

JUAN JEM.

Now there's one thing I'll give in. I do like thy tea, Mistress Corkhill. I don't know, is it the kind thou are using, or is it the way thou are makin' it, but I'm saying still, I'm never tastin' as good tea as when I'm getting a cup at the Post Office, in the lil white cups with the gool rings; and there's not many ones that is trying as many different kinds of tea as Juan boght. I'm sayin' still—

NELLIE.

Slips out and returns with tea, some baker's bread, and a piece of meat.

Help thyself, Juan. (*leaves him*). Juan drinks tea, and *furtively puts bread and meat in his pocket,*

NELLIE *entering*

How are thou doing, Juan? Thou are not eating, man. An empty sack won't stand.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

JUAN JEM.

I'm doing middling, thank ye. The fishin' is keepin' backward, I'm told. I haven't tasted a fresh herrin' this year. There will be no herrin' for stock I'm afraid, and what will poor people do in the winter time without a salt herrin' in the barrel for kytchen. Aw! the herrin' is king of the sea. Deed, and if I was a younger man I wouldn't be going on the road with a wallad. I'd be after goin' to the herrin's. But there's not berths goin' now. No, there's nothin' a man can get to do, at all, at all.

NELLIE,

I have got some ridges of potatoes that I want somebody to dig for me.

JUAN JEM.

Looks up in sudden alarm at the prospect of work, and then gets up and grimaces as if in pain.

The stiff me knee is now. It's a clean shaw. If I'm sittin' long, the pain gathers in the one place. It's that bad now I wouldn't dare put me foot on a grep.

NELLIE,

I can use the grep, Juan, if thou will pick the potatoes.

JUAN JEM.

Aw, Mistress veen, and the glad I would be to help you, but the stoopin' is that tryin' on me lumbago, I wouldn't dare do it. I am that afraid of me back that I have to refuse many a good job of work, and its sorry I am to have to do it too.

NELLIE.

I'll go for the grep, Juan. I'll not be long.

JUAN JEM, *excitedly*

I must be goin' me ways, Mistress. I got to do a message in Peel for a man this mornin' (*hurries away*).

CLUCAS, H.K. *enters.*

Well Juan, boy ; thou art in a hurry.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

JUAN JEM.

Yis, I must be goin' my ways. (*goes out*)

NELLIE (*enters*)

There is no getting rid of Juan when he starts talking, so I asked him to dig some potatoes for me; then he suddenly remembered he had business in Peel and hurried away.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Ha! Ha! Ha! Juan never liked work. Have you a "Peel City Guardian" of last week left over?

NELLIE.

Aw, yes; that was a fine speech that you made at the Sheading meeting now, Mr. Clucas.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Yes, I'm thinking I did middling well.

NELLIE.

It must be trying now to make a long speech: but maybe you had it well off.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Aw, I had planned what I was going to say.

NELLIE, *innocently*

When they are making speeches now, I wonder do they practice at home?

CLUCAS, H.K.

Well, I have a plan of my own.

NELLIE *admiringly*

Well I never!

CLUCAS, H.K.

Rehearsing they are calling it.

NELLIE *in wonderment*

Look at that now, the clever you are.

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CLUCAS, H.K.

Yes, I rehearse all my political speeches.

NELLIE.

Well, now, and how are you rehearsing, Mr. Clucas ?

CLUCAS, H.K. *shyly*

Well, I don't mind telling thee, Miss Corkhill.

NELLIE *sympathetically*

Aw, I wouldn't say a word, wouldn't breath it to a living soul.

CLUCAS, H.K.

I go out to the cowhouse and rehearse all my speeches to the heifers.

NELLIE.

Turns quickly to the shelf to hide her face, gets the paper, slips herb into it.

Here is the "Guardian" Mr. Clucas, and I am sure you will be making wonderful speeches before the day is over.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Good morning, Miss Corkhill, I am rather in a hurry to catch my train. I am going to Tynwald, and I intend to say my say ; I have it all ready. I expect the "Guardian" will give me a column on Saturday. (*goes out*)

NELLIE *smiling*

The vain old man; the pride voght that's in him. That's the kind of men that we have in the Keys. Craythers of things (*with contempt*) practising their talk, writing down what they are going to say. No wonder there is nothing done. Its time to turn them all out, and put women in. They could talk without practising. They could talk without rehearsing—Now they could talk. (*changing her tone*) I wonder when the herb will begin to work ?

CUBBON.

Hallo, Nellie ! ahoy, the shop ! Are thou in a jerrude,

LUSS NY GRAIH.

girl? Here, give us an ounce of twist. (*Takes tobacco, goes to door*) Nellie, here, give us half an ounce of 'cut'. I like 'cut' for a treat now and again. (*She crumbles herb into cut tobacco*). Thank ye. We are going to get fine weather. (*Fills pipe and goes out*).

NELLIE.

I don't know how it works in tobacco, but I think he'll get the virtue of it all right. Its a shame to put the herb on him, and him a soughagh married man, with a young growing family at him. And what will his wife say? Well I will go through with it now. I wonder who will be the next.

Enter REV. F. FALLOWS.

Ahem! Ah, good morning, Miss Corkhill (*shakes hands*) I have brought you some "Monthly Messengers" to sell for me. You know, I think these country people need some really good literature. Now, in this number there is a short article by myself, which I should like you to peruse very carefully. It is on page seven, and is entitled "Paganism in the Isle of Man" I must tell you candidly, Miss Corkhill, that I have been appalled by the amount of Pagan Superstition which still lingers in the minds of the Manx people. Many people, otherwise intelligent, believe in the power of charms and sorcery, and in the power of herbs, or foolish incantations, to exercise a definite influence over other people. In this age of scientific research such degrading practices pain me very deeply, and I am determined to have my name recorded as a faithful servant of the church, who alone, and unaided, dispelled the gloom and darkness of superstition, and brought to a foolish and benighted people, the glorious light of intelligence, reason, and truth.

NELLIE, *drawing long breath in admiration.*

Aw, but the beautiful talker you are, Mr. Fallows (*very seriously*) But you must be very careful of yourself, ye got a lil cred in your throat.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Nonsense ! I never felt better.

NELLIE.

Aw yis, but that is one of the symptoms. Aw, I know it; you must watch ye throat and ye chest. Now, I will give you a warm drink that will do you good this damp morning.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Oh, don't trouble, Miss Corkhill, you are quite unnecessarily solicitious of my well being, I assure you.

NELLIE.

No trouble, Mr. Fallows. The kettle is on the boil, and I'll make you a nice Manx drink of herb tea that will do you a power of good. (*Takes herb and goes into kitchen; returns with herb tea*)

REV. F. FALLOWS.

(Drinks) Many thanks for your hospitality. (*Raises cup gallantly*). I drink to your good health, Miss Corkhill—This is delicious. (*Nellie pours out another cup. Rev. Fallows protests, but gives way and drinks*). I feel already like a giant refreshed Ah, ha ! eh—physically, intellectually, morally.

NELLIE.

What beautiful talk. Aw, Mr. Fallows they will never leave you long with us. They will think you are wasted on us Manx ones.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

You flatter me, Miss Corkhill, but I really must be going back to Peel. Kindly call attention to my treatise in the Messenger when selling it. You will remember "Paganism in the Isle of Man" page seven (*raises hat*). Good morning. (*goes out*).

NELLIE.

Good morning. (*to herself*) Well did you ever hear the like of that "Paganism in the Isle of Man," and the boght

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gone off with half-a-pint of paganism working in his inside like barm. Aw, we'll see, we'll see. (*goes into kitchen*)

Enter blind Thobm Shimmin, a boy, Ffinto, leading him.

THOBM.

Are thou there, Miss Corkhill? Are thou in, Nellie?
(knocks with stick)

NELLIE *entering*

Well, Thobm, how are you this morning?

THOBM.

Aw, grumbling and going, as they are saying. Am wanting a pound of sugar, and give me the coarse kind, 'am thinking there's more reaching in it. Sugar is getting terrible dear for all. It has gone up twice since that Liberal Government brought in Tariff Reform and made things dear. I believe in Free Trade and Home Rule myself; I'm a Conservative, that's what I am.

NELLIE.

Thou are a bit mixed in thy politics Thobm, its the Tories that——

THOBM.

Never mind, Nellie Veen. Give us the sugar. It doesn't matter much to us ones. We are like the poor nigger I heard tell of before now. He was condemned to death and the King said to him "Which would thou rather, now, to be et by a lion or tiger?

NELLIE.

Augh! Thobm, did thou get out of the wrong side of the bed this morning; surely all the politicians are not bad.

THOBM.

Well, well, Nellie, I'm not for reading myself, and sometimes I'm taking things wrong.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

NELLIE.

The "Monthly Messenger" is in this morning. Thou better bring a copy home to thy sister. I know she likes to read the continued story in it, and there is a short article on the "Isle of Man" by Mr. Fallows.

THOBM.

And what has that crayther got to say, and him only here three months.

NELLIE *reading*

Listen: Mona's Isle is set like a jewel in the midst of the Irish Sea. The emerald waters with a border of white sea foam, splash with unceasing music upon the grey green rocks. Its purple heather-clad mountains, rise boldly to the clouds which hover in a sky of the tenderest blue. Tiny villages, and quaint hamlets nestle in the hollows of its glens and valleys. Gazed at from the sea, it is "a thing of beauty, its memory—a joy for ever" Yet other thoughts will come, and the beholder is reminded with sadness of lines of the inspired poet who sang of another Island:

"Where every prospect pleases and only man is vile."

THOBM.

Imperance! I'd vile him.

NELLIE (*continuing*)

The Manx people are mainly of Celtic stock and still retain many weird customs, which doubtless formed part of the sacrificial rites in the worship of their pagan ancestors. Though of great interest to the student of comparative religion, and of folk lore, they are distressing to the devoted minister of the—

THOBM.

I'd distress him if I get my stick on him.

NELLIE.

The Manx like all Celtic nations are a very conservative people—

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THOBM.

That fellow! I suppose he is one of them Liberals. I don't want to hear any more of it, Nellie chree. Here's the money.

NELLIE.

Gives an apple to Ffinlo, puts another in his pocket, and at the same time slips in some of the herb. Gives sugar and magazine to Thobm and slips herb into his coat pocket.

Be careful of Thobm, Ffinlo.

FFINLO.

Yes, I will (*they go out.*)

NELLIE.

Well, I've done it now. Given the herb to a lazy beggar man, a conceited member of the Keys, a sensible married fisherman, a bumptious reverend gentleman, an honest hearted blind man, and a little innocent boy. If I really thought there was anything in it, I wouldn't have done it. And there's no knowing. The old people believed in these things. Well, if I get safely out of this experiment, I'll never do the like again. Its really time I was taking sense.

CURTAIN.

(End of Act I.)

ACT II.

Miss Corkhill and Mrs. Cubbon, who has a baby on her arm, and a child holding on to her skirt.

MRS. CUBBON.

As I was saying, Nellie, I am wondering how that Kelly's wife can find time or money to go to these 'Teas'. There are so many meetings, sewing teas, Manx teas, American teas, pink and yallar teas, mothers' meeting teas. And they are taking lots of sixpences. Aye, and the money is not found on the shore.

NELLIE.

No indeed !

MRS. CUBBON.

And when a woman has a house to ready and keep clean, and childer to keep in clothes, to say nothing of boots—

NELLIE.

Yes, Yes. (*nods head in assent.*)

MRS. CUBBON.

Boots! you are saying, boots! I got a new pair for that Tommy of ours in Peel, a fortnight last Saturday, paid three and eleven pence for them, and had iron tips and protectors put on them by Joe. Aw, a civil man is Joe, a nice sogragh man, didn't charge me anything for putting them on, and that straam of a Tommy has kicked the toes out already. I'll really have to send him barefoot. I will, and I don't like to have to do that either, and his father the skipper of a nobbie. Of course he's different to a common fisherman.

NELLIE.

Yes, of course, quite different, there's more expected of you like.

MRS. CUBBON.

Yes, that Kelly's wife is thinking I'm proud. Aw, no, I'm not proud, and still I must not forget me own place, and my man skipper of a nobbie, and, (*lowering her voice,*)

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owning a quarter too, and living in our own house, and five childer, four boys and one child, and himself a good sober man. Why of course I'm proud.

NELLIE.

You have a great deal to be thankful for, Mrs. Cubbon.

MRS. CUBBON.

Yes, indeed, I am wondering that thou never took a man, now, Nellie. Thou are a nice jesh body, and good schooling at thee. But, I suppose thou are like all the girls now. All wanting curates, or young preachers, or clerks. The girls now don't want working men, or fishermen. They should be ashamed of themselves, flying in the face of Providence, as you might say. What's the hymn saying?

"A working man is the noblest work of God."

NELLIE.

That's not in our hymn book, Mrs. Cubbon. But who is that coming up the road?

MRS. CUBBON.

It looks like Juan Jem, the beggarman.

NELLIE.

It can't be, for Juan Jem walks with a stroog.

MRS. CUBBON.

Juan it is anyway, and look at the skutch that is on him. I believe he is coming here. I hope he has'n any bad news.

NELLIE.

I hope not.

MRS. CUBBON.

I'll wait and hear what he has got to say.

JUAN JEM.

Good evening, Miss Corkhill. Good evening, Mrs. Cubbon.

MRS. CUBBON.

What is the matter, Juan? Thou are all excited.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

JUAN JEM.

Maybe I am.

MRS. CUBBON.

Anything wrong, Juan Jem?

JUAN JEM *shortly*,

Thou are terrible ready with thee Juan ! Juan ! My name is John James Daugherty, Mrs. Cubbon.

MRS. CUBBON.

Well Master John James Daugherty, uss shoh. Thou have grown mighty big and high, since I gave thee a halfpenny and thy breakfast this morning. Its the last time thou will ever get anything from me, mind that now.

JUAN JEM.

I have got some private business with Mistress Corkhill, and as this is her house, I will come in after thou have finished thy newses. (*turns to go out.*)

MRS. CUBBON. (*Bounces past him*)

There is an oul saying, and it's a true one. "Put beggars on horse-back and they will ride to the devil." I wouldn't stay in the same house with ye, ye troupe. (*turning to Miss Corkhill*). If you want me Miss Corkhill, give a screech and I'll come with the poker (*goes out*).

NELLIE.

Augh ! man, what's doing on thee ? Thou were terrible down on Mrs. Cubbon.

JUAN JEM.

Never mind that one. Thy little finger is worth her whole body. Do thou know, I couldn't get thy priddas out of my head. I've been thinking of them all day, going waste in the ground, and nobody to dig them. Now, they should be dug and put in batts, and its not work for thee, Nellie. Its not a woman's work to be digging with a grep, and grobbling in the moul with your

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hands. I am thinking I had better start at the priddas, and I was noticing thy garden wants a man there too. The stone hedge is bruck, and wants building up. Now I used to be middling good at a dry dyke, and, there are lots of things about the place wanting doing.

NELLIE.

What's come over thee Juan, and when did thou learn to dyke ?

JUAN JEM.

Thou must be lonely living here by thyself. Thou ought to have a man about the place, to take care of thee. Thou might be robbed. And Government letters, too ; it is not the right thing. Now the nice and snug we would be together, and me to work for thee and to keep the house going, and to dig the potatoes—

NELLIE.

Thou would eat most of them, Juan.

JUAN JEM.

No, girl, no, and I'm not short of a few pence either. I got a few pounds safe in hidlands, and we could get more things for thy shop, and do a good business. We could get a horse and cart now, and put me name 'John James Daugherty, Grocer', on a board in front in gool lattars, and then me going around the country driving. We would do well, Nellie, and then after a lil while we could take a big shop in Peel, and the fine lady thou would be ; and me driving thee out in the bread cart. What would Mrs. Kelly and that Cubbon's wife say to us then ? We woudn't know them ones on the road. Now Nellie, I'm giving thee the first chance ; thou'll never get such an offer again, it's like. If thou would advance the money for some new clothes for me, we could get married quiet like, at Patrick, and the sooner the better.

(Enter Clucas, H.K.)

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CLUCAS, H.K.

Good evening, Miss Corkhill. (*Turning to Jem.*) What are thou doing spending thy time here, Juan? Why arn't thou doing some honest work? Get away with thee. I have some important business to transact with Miss Corkhill. (*Juan gives a despairing look at Nellie, collapses and goes out.*)

CLUCAS H.K.

Your kind heart does you credit, Miss Corkhill, but really you are encouraging idleness by giving charity to such people as Juan. Indeed, I feel that you are being imposed upon, and I shall consider it my duty to assert my authority, and assume a sort of guardianship over you. I should never forgive myself if you should suffer annoyance in any way.

NELLIE.

Don't concern yourself about me, Mr Clucas. I am alright. I can take care of myself. How did you get on at Tynwald? Did you make your speech?

CLUCAS, H.K. *impatiently.*

They are a pack of fools in the Keys. The Council are no better. The fact of the matter is, Miss Corkhill, that I quite forgot my speech. My mind was so full of our conversation this morning that I addressed the Speaker as Miss Corkhill. Of course the town members all laughed, and then, when they had finished, the country members saw it, and they began. I thought to myself, what a fool I am making speeches here, and being laughed at, when I might be sitting comfortably at home.

NELLIE.

Well its thy own doings; thou have no call to go.

CLUCAS, H.K.

I have a big house going waste for someone to occupy it, I've been a widowman for fifteen years, thou know. The house is for thee, Nellie, if thou will come and be mistress of it. There are two servants to wait on thee; a nice

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dog cart to drive out in, and thou can help me to make speeches for the Keys, and then I'll make the town members feel small when I will turn on them.

NELLIE.

Oh! Mr. Clucas, you take my breath from me. I don't know where I am. You are acting on an impulse. You should take some time to consider—

CLUCAS, H.K.

Nellie, I have considered the matter very carefully. Thou art a good-looking young woman. Thou have good schooling. Thou are well-spoken, and have a good taste in dress. Thou could entertain very well. Thou would do splendidly. And, yes, I must have thee, anyway. I feel I could not live alone without thee. Thou must be my wife, Nellie, girl.

NELLIE.

You do me a great honour, Mr. Clucas, but I must have time to consider—

CLUCAS, H.K.

Make thy mind up quick, Nellie veen. Here's somebody coming (*footsteps are heard.*) Will thou have me, Nellie? (*Excitedly in a loud whisper.*) Nod thy head, and I'll go off to Peel and see the parson. *Enter CUBBON.*

CUBBON.

Hallo the house! Hallo, Mr. Clucas; there is a man outside wanting you; he is a stranger, and asked me the way to your house.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Let him wait. I am engaged with Miss Corkhill at present.

CUBBON.

Well, I'll take a seat and wait till you are done. I am wanting to do a bit of business here myself, so don't be any longer till ye can help, for I am wanting to catch the tide this evening yet.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

CLUCAS, H.K.

If you called a little later, Mr. Cubbon.

CUBBON.

Here I am, and here I'm staying. My business is very urgent, as they are saying.

CLUCAS, H.K.

I was here first, Mr. Cubbon.

CUBBON.

And I was here sacond, Mr. Clucas.

CLUCAS, H.K.

You are forgetting your manners, Cubbon.

CUBBON.

I never had any, Clucas.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Quite right.

CUBBON.

Of course, I'm quite right, then thou must be quite wrong.

CLUCAS, H.K.

Could you not call again ?

CUBBON.

This is Miss Corkhill's shop, and I'm staying here till she tells me to go.

CLUCAS, H.K.

If I was a younger man, I'd put you out. I could have done it ten years ago.

CUBBON.

It never was, and never will be in thy power. Thou were always wind and blather.

CLUCAS, H.K.

I will not lower myself by speaking to you. Good evening, Miss Corkhill. I hope you will consider my proposition favourably. (*goes out.*)

CUBBON.

I don't know what has been doing on me all day ; I

LUSS NY GRAIH.

couldn't get thee out of my head. With everything I've tried to do, and every place I would go, there thou were. I couldn't get no rest, so at last I ses to myself, I'll have to go and get that woman, and go away with her. There's nothing else for it, Nellie. We'll have to go away together.

NELLIE, *beginning to be alarmed.*

Thou are only making fun of me, Mr. Cubbon.

CUBBON.

No, faith, I'm not. I'm in dead earnest. I ses to the crew: "Now, none of you fellows go to sea without I'll come back, because we may want to cross to the Irish shore this everin".

NELLIE, *frightened.*

I cannot understand you. What do you mean?

CUBBON.

This is my plan. Look here! us two were meant for each other, and we'll never be right here. We can't live together in the Isle of Man, so we'll go across to Ireland. I know lots of places there, where we could be nice and comfortable. My nobbie is all ready. I've gathered all the loose money I could get hold of. We can slip away at dark. Its fine weather, and I can manage the boat alone. Now, get thy things ready, quick; don't be afraid, thou will be all right. Once aboard the nobbie and we are safe.

NELLIE (*terrified*).

But—

CUBBON.

No buts, Nellie. Are thou coming of thy free will, or will I have to take thee?

NELLIE (*soothingly.*)

There's some butcheragh on thee. Thou will think different to-morrow (*earnestly, and coming towards him.*) Wait a day or two.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

CUBBON.

(Catching her in his arms. She screams)

Hush, Nellie, thou will spoil all. (*He makes for the door; she struggles and screams with terror. Rev. F. Fallows rushes in*)

REV. F. FALLOWS.

What do I hear? (*Dances about the struggling pair, and threatens the fisherman with his umbrella; then attacking him in the rear he throws his arms around Cubbon's neck and tries to relieve Miss Corkhill*)

CUBBON.

Get out of this. (*panting and choking for breath*) If I drop Nellie I'll shake the wind out of thee. (*Mrs. Cubbon rushes in with two or three children following her; she brandishes a shovel, and then stands with her back to the door in amazement and gasps out*)

MRS. CUBBON.

What's the matter? (*Cubbon, Fallows, and Nellie all stand like culprits before Mrs. Cubbon*) Least said soonest mended. I am wondering at thee, Nellie Corkhill. And thee, (*to Rev. F. Fallows*) well thou are only a boght and we expect no better of a preacher. (*to Cubbon*) I'll talk to thee when I'll get thee home. Come on now. (*points to the door with the shovel. Cubbon and his wife go out. Miss Corkhill sinks into chair*)

REV. F. FALLOWS.

I feel proud to have been of service to you, Miss Corkhill I heard you scream, and arrived just in time to save you from that scoundrel.

NELLIE.

Oh, dear, I feel quite upset. I wish this day was safely over and gone; and I have brought it all upon myself, too.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

This has been an eventful day with me, Miss Corkhill. I feel that the crisis of my life has arrived.

NELLIE.

Oh, dear, more trouble!

LUSS NY GRAIH.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Not at all. Not trouble, but joy; indeed I am confident that this day will herald in a new era of happiness for us both. I must speak plainly, Miss Corkhill; I have been over burdened all day by a consuming passion for you, and I have been compelled to come and declare myself—

NELLIE. (*anxious to bring interview to a close*)

But, Mr. Fallows, I am sure this is but a passing fancy, you are under a delusion, you will think differently to-morrow. Remember—

REV. F. FALLOWS.

I can remember nothing but your charms. This is not a passing fancy. For hours I have been struggling and reasoning against my desire for you. Without you I shall become a failure, a wreck, a castaway. With you by my side, I shall grow, flourish, become a buttress of the church, a tower of strength, and our life a charming peal of merry bells. (*Falls on one knee, and takes her hand, imploringly*)—

Nellie, dearest, pity me,
Leaving all, I come to thee.

NELLIE. (*turning away and leaving him*)

Please don't, Mr. Fallows. You are making a great blunder; someone has bewitched you.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Bewitched I am by thy bright eyes,
Dazzled by thy beauty.

NELLIE.

Oh, please don't, Mr. Fallows. I am very sorry I did it; very sorry. You will soon be better—remember your duty to your church and calling.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Bother the church!

LUSS NY GRAIH.

NELLIE,

Be reasonable, Mr. Fallows. You are speaking rashly, and without consideration.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

I have considered this matter very carefully. I will resign my position; there are plenty of other fellows with ready-made beliefs eager to step into my place.

NELLIE.

For shame of yourself! Have some respect for your cloth.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

The world salutes the cloth from custom, yet often sneers at the man. I know what I am talking about. I should be a truer and better man outside the influence of my church.

NELLIE.

Mr. Fallows, you amaze me !

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Listen, Miss Corkhill, my desire for you is making a man of me. Before this day, I was conceited and self righteous, a thing wound up like a clock and set going at regular intervals to talk platitudes. I will have done with it. I have some private means, not much it is true, yet we shall do nicely together. Marry me, and I will turn to work like a man, for he is no man who does not do some useful work. Nellie, I will take off my coat, turn up my sleeves, and work for you.

NELLIE.

Please don't, Mr. Fallows. It cannot be; I am much older than you. It would be wrong, and I am very sorry that I have brought this state of mind upon you.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Then I will leave you, but I also leave my church. I have had such a view of myself that I can never be the same man again. Good bye, Miss Corkhill, I deserve my humiliation.

NELLIE.

Don't take it so to heart, Mr. Fallows. I like you better than I ever did before ; cheer up, things will look quite different to-morrow. Stick to your church, as you are in it. If you left it, you could never return. There are plenty of boghs in it, and men of courage are wanted ; but don't follow custom too blindly. Preach what you believe to be the truth. If you would be a man and save your own soul, follow the truth, and time will prove you right.

REV. F. FALLOWS.

Good-bye, Miss Corkhill, my brain is whirling. I cannot think clearly. If I have annoyed you, I am sorry and ask your pardon. (*goes out*)

NELLIE.

I am growing ashamed of myself. I have been a foolish and wicked woman to trifle with men's affections. Passion is more easily aroused than set at rest.

(*enter Blind Thobm, feeling his way in*)

THOBM

Are thou there, Nellie veen ?

NELLIE. (*in subdued voice*)

Yes, Thobm. What is it ?

THOBM.

Are thou alone, chree ?

NELLIE.

Yes, there is nobody in.

THOBM.

Shut the door, Nellie ; I want to talk to thee.

NELLIE.

Tut, Tut ! Thobm ; don't make a secret of what thou have to say.

THOBM.

Aye, but it is a secret, Nellie—a secret that I have kept in my heart for many a long year. But I'm telling thee to-day. I cannot keep it any longer.

LUSS NY GRAIH.

NELLIE. (*in distress*)

Don't, Thobm, thou art not looking well; wait till to-morrow, thou will be better to-morrow.

THOBM.

Where are thou, Nellie? Thou are in trouble. I can tell by thy voice.

NELLIE (*weeping quietly*)

Don't tell me, Thobm; I am not worthy to know thy secret. I am a frit vogh, and there is no depending on me.

THOBM.

Thou are the truest woman in the world to me, Nellie. Ever since we went to school together I have liked thee better than any other living being. Thy voice has been music to me, and thy laugh has been like the warmth of the sun. I always think of thee, as I saw thee before I lost my sight, a stugga of a school-girl. Thy eyes were laughing and brown, and thy hair blowing about thy face and neck. Thy voice was always kind, villish, and to-day I had to come and tell thee. I am only a blind, helpless man, and I do not expect thee to care for me. (*Nellie puts her head on her arms on the counter and gives way to a fit of crying*) But I could not keep my secret any longer, and now thou know—Thou are crying, veen.

NELLIE. (*rising and drying her eyes*)

Thobm, I am not a bit like the picture thou have drawn of me. I am a foolish, selfish woman, playing with the sacred things of life. Do not think of me, Thobm; I am not worthy of thee.

THOBM.

Well, well, veen. If thou are foolish and selfish, I wonder what the good ones are like.

NELLIE.

Don't think of me, Thobm. Here's Ffinlo. (*Thobm sits down*)

FFINLO.

I wanted to bring you something, and I hadn't anything to give, so I have brought you some flowers.

LUSS NY GRAIH

NELLIE. (*takes child in her arms and kisses him*)
Here's an apple, now, and take Thobm home, there's a
good boy.

THOBM.

It's a secret, Nellie.

NELLIE.

Yes, Thobm. Thou may trust me. (*They go out, Ffinlo leading Thobm*) There it is over. Never again will I
meddle with things I do not understand. I've learned
a lesson. (*thoughtfully*)

Men and Women are strange,
Life is mystery, and Love rules all.

POSTMAN, (*with bag*)

There are not many letters to-night. (*unlocks bag and pours letters on the counter; they sort letters*) A letter for
thee, Miss Corkhill, and a foreign stamp too.

NELLIE.

Who will that be from; there is nobody foreign writing to
me. (*puts letter aside on shelf; they go on sorting. She turns
and examines letter and replaces it on shelf; postman takes bag
and letters in hand and goes out*)

POSTMAN.

Good night, Miss Corkhill.

NELLIE.

Good night, Ned. (*turning over letter*) Now, I wonder
who it is from. I do not recognize the handwriting, and
it's a man's hand. The postmark is strange, now—
Callao. Where is that place? I hope there is no bad
news. I wonder what it is about, now? Shall I open it? I
suppose I better, (*opens and reads*)

“Dear Nellie,” who is it I wonder? *turns to signature.*
It's from William. Well, I never! (*reads*)

“Dear Nellie—

Have you quite forgotten me?—I am coming
back to claim you. I shall tell you all when I
come. I have made a competency, and you must
share it with me. I have the old hymn paper yet,
and it still contains the remains of the LUSS NY
GRAIH you placed in it nearly sixteen years ago.”

—The LUSS NY GRAIH has brought William back to
me!

Curtain.

Printed by



North Quay,
DOUGLAS, MANN.